(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the expected cost of the plant; and

(d) by when the plant would become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) In view of the above, do not arise.

Power theft

†3288. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that theft of power is still taking place in Delhi and the entire country despite change in meter policy;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take steps to check this; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir. Theft of power takes place in varying magnitude in the country. Power distribution falls under the jurisdiction of State Governments and the activities to contain theft of power have to be undertaken by the power utilities.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has given priority to reduction of transmission and distribution losses including power theft. The Central Electricity Authority has issued guidelines for reduction of transmission and distribution losses including power theft and for conducting Energy Audits in power systems. These guidelines have been circulated to all the power utilities, which are taking the following steps to prevent the theft of energy—

a. Mass checking drive is carried out periodically by vigilance squads as well as field staff. Inspections are being carried out by district units of engineers and prosecutions of erring consumers are launched by Police Officers manning the anti Power theft Squads.

b. Installations are being made pilfer proof.

c. A scheme for incentive to informants is in operation. A scheme to recognize the performance of individuals to curb theft of energy by providing incentive to deserving officers/employees has also been introduced.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

d. Load inspection studies for major load centres are being conducted.

e. Penalty for imprisonment is also being imposed on the culprits.

f. With the help of computerization of billing process, abnormal consumption of consumers is being detected. If consumption is less than 15% of the average, cases are immediately inspected for detecting tampering of meter/theft of energy.

The Government of India has also launched a scheme for Accelerated Power Development Programme for renovation & modernization/life extension uprating of existing old power plants, and upgradation of sub-transmission & distribution network including energy audit activities and metering in the distribution circles in a phased manner. In the first phase of this programme, since rechristened as Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (APDRP), 63 distribution circles in the States have been taken up for intensive upgradation so as to serve as models for remaining circles in the country for improvement in a phased manner. The Government has made an allocation of Rs. 3500 crores during 2002-03.

The Government of India had also set up a Steering Committee for preparing guidelines/manuals for improvement of Sub-transmission & distribution systems on a scientific basis. These include guidelines on Energy Accounting and audit, which would help in containing commercial losses.

Necessary amendments have been enacted to the IE Act, 1910 to make theft of electricity a cognizable offence. Stricter provisions and penalties are envisaged in the Electricity Bill, 2001 in case of power theft.

Water shortage in Athurvala Vistapeeth, Dehradun

3289. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tehri dam oustees who have been settled in Athurvala Vistapeeth, Dehradun are facing acute water shortage, as the installed tubewells are not functioning properly;

(b) what steps Government propose to take to solve the water crisis in the area;